
E-ALERT is compiled based on a service we receive from the Department of State's Office of International Information Programs. We are sending it to alert you of the latest issues and debates in the United States.

It covers (1) U.S. Federal government documents, especially those from executive branch departments and those from the Congressional branch; (2) policy briefs from major private think tanks; (3) major reports from professional associations; and (4) articles.

Please contact the Information Resource Center if you have problem retrieving any of the documents listed. To cancel this service, please reply to the present message and type "unsubscribe" as the text of your message.

Title Index

- [Item#1](#) U.S.-China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress
- [Item#2](#) Modi Doubles Down on the Neighborhood
- [Item#3](#) Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations
- [Item#4](#) Syria's Neighbors Want Assad to Step Down, But No Appetite for Aid to Rebels
- [Item#5](#) Iran's Global Image Largely Negative: Favorable Ratings Fall Further in the Middle East
- [Item#6](#) Call for Inclusiveness May Not Work for Middle East's Sectarian Divide
- [Item#7](#) Trafficking in Persons Report 2014
- [Item#8](#) Political Polarization in the American Public
- [Item#9](#) Immigration: Visa Security Policies
- [Item#10](#) NASA Appropriations and Authorizations: A Fact Sheet
- [Item#11](#) Internet Governance and the Domain Name System: Issues for Congress
- [Item#12](#) Year-Round Schools: In Brief

Reports

- [Item#1](#)
U.S.-China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Shirley A. Kan. June 10, 2014.

The report, updated as warranted, discusses policy issues regarding military-to-military (mil-to-mil) contacts with the People's Republic of China (PRC) and provides a record of major contacts and crises since 1993. Issues for Congress include whether the Administration complies with legislation overseeing dealings with the PLA and pursues contacts with the PLA that advance a prioritized set of U.S. security interests, especially the operational safety of U.S. military personnel.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL32496.pdf> [PDF format, 87 pages, 916.22 KB].

Item#2

Modi Doubles Down on the Neighborhood. YaleGlobal. Alyssa Ayres. June 10, 2014.

In anticipating India's foreign policy under newly elected Prime Minister Narendra Modi, many have focused on his pragmatic growth policy based on international trade and investment while wondering if he would first turn to East Asia. Early signals suggest that Modi will focus on building closer ties in the immediate region, with other member states of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation as well as the Mauritius Indian Ocean region, explains Alyssa Ayres.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/modi-doubles-down-neighborhood> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#3

Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Jeremy M. Sharp. June 5, 2014.

The report provides an overview of the key issues for Congress related to Egypt and information on U.S. foreign aid to Egypt. The United States has provided significant military and economic assistance to Egypt since the late 1970s. U.S. policy makers have routinely justified aid to Egypt as an investment in regional stability, built primarily on long-running cooperation with the Egyptian military and on sustaining the March 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. Successive U.S. Administrations have publicly characterized Egypt's government as generally influencing developments in the Middle East in line with U.S. interests. U.S. policy makers are now debating complex questions about the future of U.S.-Egypt relations, and these debates and events in Egypt are shaping consideration of appropriations and authorization legislation in the 113th Congress.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33003.pdf> [PDF format, 21 pages, 494.9 KB].

Item#4

Syria's Neighbors Want Assad to Step Down, But No Appetite for Aid to Rebels. Pew Research Global Attitudes Project. June 16, 2014.

After three years of civil war, Syria's neighbors fear that al Qaeda or other extremist groups could take control of that war-torn land, according to the survey. Regional publics widely disapprove of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and they want him to step down. Nevertheless, there is mounting opposition in the Middle East to the West or Arab nations supplying arms and military supplies to anti-government groups in Syria.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.pewglobal.org/files/2014/06/Pew-Global-Attitudes-Syria-Report-FINAL-June-16-2014.pdf>
[PDF format, 13 pages, 331.82 KB].

Item#5

Iran's Global Image Largely Negative: Favorable Ratings Fall Further in the Middle East. Pew Research Global Attitudes Project. June 18, 2014.

As negotiations over its nuclear program continue this week in Vienna, a poll finds that Iran's global image remains overwhelmingly negative. Moreover, ratings for Iran in several Middle Eastern nations have declined significantly in recent years. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, who was elected just over one year ago, also receives poor marks in the region. In Turkey, Tunisia, Jordan and Egypt, Rouhani is even less popular than his predecessor, the controversial former president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.pewglobal.org/files/2014/06/Pew-Global-Attitudes-Iran-Report-FINAL-June-18-20141.pdf>
[PDF format, 23 pages, 347.60 KB].

Item#6

Call for Inclusiveness May Not Work for Middle East's Sectarian Divide. YaleGlobal. Dilip Hiro. June 18, 2014.

ISIS, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, began as an Al Qaeda offshoot in Iraq and is described as more fanatical than the parent group. With up to 5000 troops, ISIS controls an area of Syria and now storms through northern Iraq exploiting power vacuums and frustrations over minority rights. The group imposes a rigid Sunni interpretation of Islam that could unleash sectarian war across the region, explains author Dilip Hiro. Hiro reviews the history of Shia and Sunni influences over governance and warns that the centuries-old religious divide will continue to test the patience of western democracies who quarrel over how to intervene.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/age-old-sectarian-division-continues-roil-middle-east-paying-no-heed-call-inclusiveness> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#7

Trafficking in Persons Report 2014. U.S. Department of State. June 2014.

"We each have a responsibility to make this horrific and all-too-common crime a lot less common. And our work with victims is the key that will open the door to real change--not just on behalf of the more than 44,000 survivors who have been identified in the past year, but also for the more than 20 million victims of trafficking who have not. As Secretary of State, I've seen with my own two eyes countless individual acts of courage and commitment. I've seen how victims of this crime can become survivors and how survivors can become voices of conscience and conviction in the cause. This year's Trafficking in Persons Report offers a roadmap for the road ahead as we confront the scourge of trafficking." -- John F. Kerry, Secretary of State.

<http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2014/index.htm> [HTML format with links to individual chapters and PDF file].

Item#8

Political Polarization in the American Public. Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. June 12, 2014.

According to the report, Republicans and Democrats are more divided along ideological lines, and partisan antipathy is deeper and more extensive, than at any point in the last two decades. These trends manifest themselves in myriad ways, both in politics and in everyday life. A survey of 10,000 adults nationwide finds that these divisions are greatest among those who are the most engaged and active in the political process.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.people-press.org/files/2014/06/6-12-2014-Political-Polarization-Release.pdf> [PDF format, 121 pages, 3.36 MB].

Item#9

Immigration: Visa Security Policies. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Ruth Ellen Wasem. June 9, 2014.

At its core, visa integrity protects the United States from foreign nationals who threaten public health and safety or national security, while at the same time welcomes legitimate foreign nationals who bolster the U.S. economy and foster international exchanges. Balancing these dual, and some would say competing, missions is an ongoing challenge. The policy questions center on the efficacy of the process, the security features of the policies, and whether the law needs to be revised to improve efficiency and strengthen security.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/homesecc/R43589.pdf> [PDF format, 22 pages, 419.2 KB].

Item#10

NASA Appropriations and Authorizations: A Fact Sheet. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Daniel Morgan. June 4, 2014.

In the current fiscal environment, congressional deliberations about the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) often focus on the availability of funding. This fact sheet provides data on past and current NASA appropriations as well as proposed NASA appropriations for FY2015 and proposed authorizations of NASA appropriations for FY2015 and FY2016.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/space/R43419.pdf> [PDF format, 5 pages, 236.08 KB].

Item#11

Internet Governance and the Domain Name System: Issues for Congress. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Lennard G. Kruger. June 10, 2014.

The Internet is often described as a "network of networks" because it is not a single physical entity, but hundreds of thousands of interconnected networks linking hundreds of millions of computers around

the world. As such, the Internet is international, decentralized, and comprised of networks and infrastructure largely owned and operated by private sector entities. As the Internet grows and becomes more pervasive in all aspects of modern society, the question of how it should be governed becomes more pressing.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42351.pdf> [PDF format, 29 pages, 413.8 KB].

Item#12

Year-Round Schools: In Brief. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Rebecca R. Skinner. June 9, 2014.

In general, year-round schools are schools that reorganize a traditional school year without allowing for any extended breaks in instruction (e.g., 10-week summer vacation). Rather, the days usually included in summer break are redistributed to create regular breaks throughout the year. The research on the extent to which year-round schools affect student achievement has generally been found to be inconclusive and lacking in methodological rigor. There is some consensus that year-round schooling has no effect or a small positive effect on student performance; however, the quality of the studies that led to these findings has been questioned.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43588.pdf> [PDF format, 9 pages, 215.13 KB].